

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Representative Xavier Becerra (CA-31), Vice Chair of the House Democratic Caucus and a member of the House Ways and Means and Budget Committees, today applauded a U.S. District Court of New York decision in the case *Association for Molecular Pathology v. U.S. Patent and Trademark Office*, which invalidates patents on genes linked to hereditary breast and ovarian cancer. The ruling is the result of a lawsuit brought by a group of patients, physicians and scientists.

“I have long believed that gene patents hurt patients by limiting access to life-saving tests and preventing scientists from conducting cutting-edge research; that is why I have sponsored legislation banning gene patents,” Rep. Becerra said.

Although this court decision represents significant progress, it does not prevent the U.S. Patent and Trade Office from issuing future patents.

This decision is also subject to appeal and, therefore, is not yet final. This decision is consistent with gene patent legislation Rep. Becerra has authored and will reintroduce. Rep. Becerra’s bill affirms that products of nature, such as the human genome, cannot be patented.

“I will once again introduce legislation banning gene patenting to ensure patients’ access to their own medical information, reduce the costs of gene tests and increase scientific research into personalized medicine. The district court’s decision moves us one day closer to ensuring that genomic research and technology will be there to serve the interests of human kind,” Rep. Becerra said.